

If You Have A Body, You Need To Practice!

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If you have a body, that means you need to practice!

If you have a body, it means you were born. It means you already faced birth. Out of this human life's four sufferings of birth, aging, sickness, and death, if you have a body, then automatically you have already suffered from birth. Then after birth, is it simple and happy? No! Again suffering. Body is suffering, mind is suffering, outerly and innerly, everything is complicated. That means we need to practice.

Even if right now your body is okay, every day you are getting older. You still have old age, sickness, and death to face. Because we are facing those, we need to practice! Everyone is facing them. Everyone had a birth—we don't remember, but that is our first, terrible suffering in this life. Mother suffers and baby suffers, so much, like torture.

Then you are grown up, a young man or young woman. Really you think you are a big deal or a hero. No more suffering! Never die! That is our stupid thinking. Uh-uh! Actually, everybody is going to go on the same road: getting older and older, body functioning less and less, everything going down, and then getting sick, and then finally dying. Nobody has ever escaped aging, sickness, and death. Not by being a hero. Not by being pretty or handsome. Not even being in the United States, the most powerful country. Nobody escapes!

Everybody is facing the same direction. Not only you or me, not only some other 'him' or 'her'—everybody is equally facing that. If you have a body, the birth of that body means death is guaranteed. That is a real guarantee, not a lie! For everybody, equally. That means everybody equally needs to practice. Everybody equally has reason to say, “Vajrasattva, help me! Buddhas and bodhisattvas, protect me!”

Facing birth, then aging, then sickness, then death, everybody has sufferings and complications. Each stage, there is again suffering, again complicated. Nothing easy! I am sorry, everybody, that we have to face that. If I could choose or you could choose, nobody would face that. But nobody chooses. What is there, we have to face it.

Therefore, at each stage we need practice. At each step, we need refuge. At each step, handsome means nothing, pretty means nothing, rich means nothing, powerful means nothing. Only practice means something, how much the dharma has been brought into your heart.

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Right now, we know we are going to die. We can see that destination—close or far, who knows. Seeing that destination, we need to practice.

We don't know beyond that, where we are going to go. Beyond that, we don't know what we are facing. Again, that means we need to practice! We need refuge in the Three Jewels, or Three Roots, or Vajrasattva, or Tara, or whatever buddha.

You can practice. Nobody can say, “I can't.” Everybody can say OM BENZAR SATTO HUNG or OM MANI PEME HUNG. The most simple and also the most profound. Nobody can say, “I don't know Vajrasattva! I don't know Chenrezig!” You have statues and thangkas. Inside your computers, you have thousands and millions of pictures, really amazing things. All the buddhas—you can see their form, you can say their mantra, you can cultivate their wisdom mind qualities, and that way you can receive their blessings, enlightened body, speech, and mind, inseparable.

Okay? You do have a body, a wonderful human precious body. That means you need to practice, stage by stage! This is your timing!

Tashi Delek!

- Gyatrul